

INDEX
TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION – OCTOBER 1, 2014

<u>SUBJECT</u>		<u>PAGE</u>
	<u>OPENING CEREMONIES</u>	
1.	Call to Order	1
2.	Flag Salute	1
3.	Roll Call/Motions for Excused Absence	1
4.	Posting of the Agenda	1
5.	Approval of Minutes	1
6.	Requests for Postponement	1
7.	<u>ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1</u>	2
8.	<u>TIME EXTENSIONS</u>	2
9.	<u>SIGN HEARINGS</u>	2
10.	<u>CONTINUED HEARINGS</u>	
10A.	CUP14-00020: John Walser	<i>Res. 14-054</i> 2-3
10B.	MOD14-00010: Robert Mondavi	<i>Res. 14-055</i> 3-4
10C.	CUP14-00015 (EAS14-00003): Public Storage, Inc.	4
11.	<u>WAIVERS</u>	4
12.	<u>FORMAL HEARINGS</u>	
12A.	DIV14-00009: Peter Sy (EHZ Development, Inc.)	4-7
13.	<u>RESOLUTIONS</u>	7
14.	<u>PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS</u>	7
15.	<u>MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS</u>	
15A.	Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports	7
16.	<u>CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS</u>	7
17.	<u>LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES</u>	7
18.	<u>ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2</u>	7-8
19.	<u>ADJOURNMENT</u>	8

At 8:19 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

October 1, 2014

**MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING OF
THE TORRANCE PLANNING COMMISSION**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The Torrance Planning Commission convened in a regular session at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, October 1, 2014 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

2. SALUTE TO THE FLAG

The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Commissioner Herring.

3. ROLL CALL/ MOTIONS FOR EXCUSED ABSENCE

Present: Commissioners D'anjou, Gibson, Herring, Skoll, Tsao, Watson and Chairperson Polcari.

Absent: None.

Also Present: Planning Manager Lodan, Planning Associate Gomez, Plans Examiner Noh, Sr. Fire Prevention Officer Kazandjian, Associate Civil Engineer Symons and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan.

Chairperson Polcari welcomed newly appointed Commissioners Milton Herring and Richard Tsao.

4. POSTING OF THE AGENDA

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the agenda was posted on the Public Notice Board at 3031 Torrance Boulevard on Friday, September 26, 2014.

5. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve the August 20, 2014 Planning Commission minutes as written. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous roll call vote, with Commissioners Herring and Tsao abstaining.

6. REQUESTS FOR POSTPONEMENTS

Planning Manager Lodan reported that the applicant has agreed to continue Agenda Item 10C, CUP14-000015: Public Storage, Inc., to October 15, 2014 to accommodate neighbors who wish to attend back-to-school night at West High this evening.

MOTION: Commissioner D'anjou moved to continue Item 10C to October 15, 2014. The motion was seconded by Councilmember Watson and passed by unanimous voice vote.

Chairperson Polcari announced that the hearing would not be re-advertised because it was continued to a date certain.

7. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #1** – None.

*

Chairperson Polcari reviewed the policies and procedures of the Planning Commission, including the right to appeal decisions to the City Council.

8. **TIME EXTENSIONS**- None.

9. **SIGN HEARINGS**- None.

10. **CONTINUED HEARINGS**

10A. **CUP14-00020: JOHN O. WALSER JR. (CHUCK LYONS)**

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Conditional Use Permit to allow the operation of a retail business with recycling services on property located in the M-2 Zone at 488 Amapola Avenue. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Associate Gomez introduced the request.

Commissioner Gibson disclosed that she is a long-time friend of Jane Walser, but that would not affect her decision on this case.

Jane Walser, wife of applicant John Walser, voiced her agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. She reported that the business is relocating from another location in Torrance and it will consist of a retail operation selling art supplies, digital and other general merchandise and a recycling center with an emphasis on e-waste. She noted that the recycling operation has raised over \$10,000 for the Madrona Marsh.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Ms. Walser confirmed that she was aware the Condition No. 5 prohibits outside storage of any kind and requires that all recyclables be sorted and stored within the building.

Charles Lyons, El Segundo, owner of the subject property, reported that outside storage is not allowed anywhere within this business park per the CC&Rs.

In response to Commissioner Tsao's inquiry, Mr. Lyons provided clarification regarding the parking arrangement and the height of the mezzanine.

Responding to Commissioner Gibson's inquiry, Ms. Walser reported that the business was at the previous location for 12 years.

Commissioner D'anjou apologized for any inconvenience caused by the cancellation of the September 17 Commission meeting due to a lack of a quorum.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve CUP14-00020, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Gomez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-054.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-054. The motion was seconded by Commissioner D'anjou and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

10B. MOD14-00010: ROBERT MONDAVI

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Modification of a previously approved Conditional Use Permit (CUP79-36) to allow beer and wine service and an outdoor seating area, in conjunction with an existing restaurant use on property located in the C-3 Zone at 3605 Artesia Boulevard. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15301 – Existing Facilities.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Associate Gomez introduced the request.

Charles Belak-Berger, project architect, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He reported that the applicant has a dental practice next door to this site and would like to expand his operation to include a gourmet burger restaurant to be named "Bistro Grill."

Commissioner Skoll asked about signage for the restaurant, and Mr. Belak-Berger indicated that the signs were still in design process.

Planning Manager Lodan advised that signs will be approved administratively as long as they comply with Code requirements.

Commissioner Tsao stated that he was pleased this site was being improved and asked about the design of the patio.

Mr. Belak-Berger explained that the patio will be open air with no roof and will be surrounded by a 4-foot high block wall topped with plexiglass.

Robert Mondavi, applicant, stated that he is committed to cleaning up the area, helping the police deter crime, and creating job opportunities for young people.

In response to Commissioner Watson's inquiry, Mr. Mondavi reported that he has had his dental practice at this location for 10 years.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to close the public hearing. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Watson and passed by unanimous voice vote.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to approve MOD14-00010, as conditioned, including all findings of fact set forth by staff. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Planning Associate Gomez read aloud the number and title of Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-055.

MOTION: Commissioner Skoll moved to adopt Planning Commission Resolution No. 14-055. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Gibson and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

10C. CUP14-00015 (EAS14-00003) PUBLIC STORAGE, INC.

Planning Commission consideration for adoption of a Negative Declaration and approval of a Conditional Use Permit to demolish the front section of an existing storage building and construction of a new four-story self-storage building on property located in the ML(M1-PP) Zone at 4460 Del Amo Boulevard.

Continued to October 15, 2014.

11. WAIVERS – None.

12. FORMAL HEARINGS

12A. DIV14-00009: PETER SY (EHZ DEVELOPMENT, INC)

Planning Commission consideration for approval of a Division of Lot to allow a flag-lot subdivision of one parcel into four parcels on property located in the R-1 Zone at 2126 238th Street. This project is Categorically Exempt from CEQA per Guidelines Section 15315 – Minor Land Divisions.

Recommendation: Approval.

Planning Associate Gomez introduced the request and noted supplemental material available at the meeting.

Jack Lee, civil engineer for the project, voiced his agreement with the recommended conditions of approval. He explained that the applicant was proposing to divide one lot into four lots and build four single-family homes.

In response to Commissioner Skoll's inquiry, Mr. Lee confirmed that existing structures will be demolished and four new homes will be built.

Commissioner Skoll stated that since the site is directly across the street from John Adams Elementary School, he believed conditions should be added requiring the contractor to work with the principal in order to coordinate the project's vehicular traffic to minimize the impact on the start and end of the school day; to provide the principal with an emergency contact number; and to make sure that construction equipment does not interfere with the operation of the school or create a safety hazard for school children.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan advised that the Commission can request that the contractor be a good neighbor and work with the school principal, but the school district has no control over this construction project just as neighbors have no control over school construction projects. He noted that the contractor must comply with all restrictions placed on construction per the TMC, including hours of construction, noise levels, and the storage of construction materials.

Commissioner Skoll proposed that all construction vehicles be required to park on site, and Assistant City Attorney Sullivan related his understanding that it would be impossible to pour the foundations for the four houses without having a concrete pumper parked on the street.

Commissioner Skoll requested that the contractor voluntarily coordinate the project's vehicular traffic to minimize the impact on the start and end of the school day and to provide the principal with an emergency contact number. He emphasized the need for the City to closely monitor construction to ensure the safety of school children.

Planning Manager Lodan stated that staff will make sure the building inspector is aware of the Commission's concerns and pays close attention to the site, noting that the Code requires the site to be fenced.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan expressed confidence that the principal of Adams School will take action if any problems develop.

James Harrer, 2120 238th Street, submitted photographs and a petition in opposition to the project. He stated that the street already experiences gridlock several times a day due to school traffic; that the apartments at the end of the block have created a huge parking problem; and that the proposed project will only make a bad situation worse. He contended that the lot will have to be built up 8-10 feet in order to access the sewer, which will be very detrimental to the value of his property. He expressed concerns that the project includes very little space for yards and related his understanding that a special permit is required because more than five trees will have to be removed to facilitate construction. He urged the Commission to allow only two homes on this site.

Chairperson Polcari disclosed that Mr. Harrer was his employer several years ago, but this would not impact his decision on this case.

Commissioner Skoll asked about Mr. Harrer's claim that the lot will have to be built up 8-10 feet, and Planning Manager Lodan advised that the grading of the site has not been reviewed and the only issue before the Commission was the subdivision of this lot.

Commissioner Skoll questioned whether the project itself would be brought back for review, and Planning Manager Lodan reported that Commission approval was not required.

Commissioner Skoll voiced his opinion that it was important to know how the lot will be graded since this will have a bearing on the Commission's decision.

Associate Civil Engineer Symons related his understanding that the applicant intends to keep building pads low and pump storm water out to the street, which can also be done with sewer water.

Commissioner Skoll asked about Mr. Harrer's claim that a special permit was needed to remove more than five trees, and Planning Manager Lodan responded that to his knowledge, there was no such requirement in the TMC.

Matt Puccio, 2134 238th Street, stated that he purchased his home four years ago because he likes open space and expressed concerns that the new houses would tower over his house and block sunlight from his yard. He reported that speeding is a problem on this street and parking is very limited. He contended that sump pumps are unreliable and should be avoided. He noted that this is not a case of someone building their dream house, but rather these houses are being built for profit and urged the Commission to protect his investment by allowing only two homes on this site.

Rod Norris, 2144 238th Street, reported that a similar development was built next to his house and he had to plant a row of trees to restore his privacy. He related his belief that Commissioners need to see a profile of the property before making a decision so they can see the impact this project will have on neighbors. He questioned whether the proposed 15-foot driveway meets Fire Code requirements.

Sr. Fire Prevention Officer Kazandjian advised that the 15-foot driveway meets Code requirements for residential properties, however, the Fire Department may require it to be increased to 20 feet after review of the formal submittal.

Nancy Chang, representing the property owner, reported that each house will provide four parking spaces, two in the garage and two in front of the garage and that there will be ample room for landscaping, with a 33½-foot setback in the front and a 21-foot setback in the rear. She offered her assurance that the property owner will work with the school principal to minimize the project's impact.

Mr. Lee reported that the building pads will be within one or two feet of the existing elevation.

Commissioner Herring asked about reducing the number of units from four to two, and Ms. Chang responded that she would have to discuss that with the property owner. She stated that they have worked with the Planning Department for some time on this project and according to the Code, it meets the criteria for subdividing this lot into four lots.

Commissioner Skoll expressed his reluctance to approve the Division of Lot even though it meets Code requirements.

Chairperson Polcari stated that he could not support this proposal because to him it looks like four very large houses on one lot.

Commissioner Watson noted her concurrence with Chairperson Polcari's remarks and encouraged the applicant to consider building two houses on the lot instead of four.

Commissioner Gibson indicated that she was strongly opposed to building four houses on this property.

Commissioner D'anjou voiced her opinion that the proposed subdivision was a case of overbuilding and encouraged the applicant to significantly downscale the project.

MOTION: Commissioner Gibson moved to deny DIV14-00009 without prejudice. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Skoll and passed by unanimous roll call vote.

Assistant City Attorney Sullivan noted that a resolution reflecting the Commission's action will be brought back for approval at a later date.

13. **RESOLUTIONS** – None.

14. **PUBLIC WORKSHOP ITEMS** – None.

15. **MISCELLANEOUS ITEMS**

15A. **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR WEEKLY SUMMARY REPORTS**

Planning Manager Lodan noted that Community Development Director Weekly Summary Reports for August 21, August 29, September 4, and September 12, 2014 were distributed to the Commission.

16. **REVIEW OF CITY COUNCIL ACTION ON PLANNING MATTERS**

Planning Manager Lodan noted that Milton Herring and Richard Tsao were appointed to the Commission at the September 23, 2014 City Council meeting and welcomed them to the Commission on behalf of staff.

17. **LIST OF TENTATIVE PLANNING COMMISSION CASES**

Planning Manager Lodan reviewed the agenda for the October 15, 2014 Planning Commission meeting.

18. **ORAL COMMUNICATIONS #2**

18A. Commissioner Herring stated that he was honored to serve on the Planning Commission and looked forward to working with his fellow Commissioners to make a great city even better.

18B. Commissioner Gibson welcomed Mr. Herring and Mr. Tsao to the Commission.

18C. Commissioner Skoll also welcomed the new commissioners. He reported that he has it on good authority that the new Costco will open on December 15 of next year.

18D. Commission D'anjou welcomed the new commissioners.

18E. Commissioner Watson welcomed Mr. Herring and Mr. Tsao. She thanked Commissioners for the support they have given her in the last month.

18F. Commissioner Watson announced that the Torrance Historical Society will be holding its biennial tour of historic homes in downtown Torrance on October 11 and 12, which will include Torrance's first library and a house that has not been remodeled for 70 years.

18G. Commissioner Tsao stated that he was honored to serve on the commission and thanked staff for their assistance. He related his belief that it was important to consider the concerns of residents while encouraging new development.

18H. Chairperson Polcari welcomed the new commissioners and thanked staff for their efforts.

19. ADJOURNMENT

At 8:19 p.m., the meeting was adjourned to Wednesday, October 15, 2014 at 7:00 p.m.

###

Approved as submitted October 15, 2014 s/ Rebecca Poirier, City Clerk
